

COUNTRY DATA: BRAZIL: Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

Following more than three centuries under Portuguese rule, Brazil gained its independence in 1822, maintaining a monarchical system of government until the abolition of slavery in 1888 and the subsequent proclamation of a republic by the military in 1889. Brazilian coffee exporters politically dominated the country until populist leader Getulio VARGAS rose to power in 1930. By far the largest and most populous country in South America, Brazil underwent more than half a century of populist and military government until 1985, when the military regime peacefully ceded power to civilian rulers. Brazil continues to pursue industrial and agricultural growth and development of its interior. Exploiting vast natural resources and a large labor pool, it is today South America's leading economic power and a regional leader, one of the first in the area to begin an economic recovery. Highly unequal income distribution and crime remain pressing problems. In January 2010, Brazil assumed a nonpermanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2010-11 term.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Eastern South America, bordering the Atlantic Ocean
Area	8,514,877 sq km
Climate	Mostly tropical, but temperate in south
Natural Resources	Bauxite, gold, iron ore, manganese, nickel, phosphates, platinum, tin, rare earth elements, uranium, petroleum, hydropower, timber
Total Renewable Water Resources	8,233 cu km (2000)
Freshwater Withdrawal	Total: 59.3 cu km/yr (20%/18%/62%) Per capita: 318 cu m/yr (2000)
Natural Hazards	Recurring droughts in northeast; floods and occasional frost in south
Environmental Issues	Deforestation in Amazon Basin destroys the habitat and endangers a multitude of plant and animal species indigenous to the area; there is a lucrative illegal wildlife trade; air and water pollution in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, and several other large cities; land degradation and water pollution caused by improper mining activities; wetland degradation; severe oil spills

PEOPLE

Population	201,103,330
Ethnic Groups	White 53.7%, mulatto (mixed white and black) 38.5%, black 6.2%, other (includes Japanese, Arab, Amerindian) 0.9%, unspecified 0.7% (2000 census)
Religions	Roman Catholic (nominal) 73.6%, Protestant 15.4%, Spiritualist 1.3%, Bantu/voodoo 0.3%, other 1.8%, unspecified 0.2%, none 7.4% (2000 census)
Languages	Portuguese (official and most widely spoken language); note - less common languages include Spanish (border areas and schools), German, Italian, Japanese, English, and a large number of minor Amerindian languages
Literacy Rate	88.6%
Major Infectious Diseases	HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS: 730,000 (2007 est.)
GOVERNMENT	
Type	Federal republic
Independence	7 September 1822 (from Portugal)
Constitution	5 October 1988
Legal System	Based on Roman codes; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	Coffee, soybeans, wheat, rice, corn, sugarcane, cocoa, citrus; beef
Industries	Textiles, shoes, chemicals, cement, lumber, iron ore, tin, steel, aircraft, motor vehicles and parts, other machinery and equipment
Import commodities	Machinery, electrical and transport equipment, chemical products, oil, automotive parts, electronics
Import Partners	US 16.12%, China 12.61%, Argentina 8.77%, Germany 7.65%, Japan 4.3% (2009)
Export Commodities	Transport equipment, iron ore, soybeans, footwear, coffee, autos
Export Partners	China 12.49%, US 10.5%, Argentina 8.4%, Netherlands 5.39%, Germany 4.05% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$10,100 (2009 est.)
Population below poverty line	26% (2008)

*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.